Rosaleen Howard

Language Ideologies, Identities and the Discourse of Interculturalism in the Andes[1]

The decade of the 1990s saw indigenous political activism bring about significant shifts in the balance of power in the Andean states. In marked contrast to the homogenising dominant ideology of preceding decades, cultural identity became a key issue in the debates leading up to Constitutional and social policy reforms that took into account indigenous demands to an unprecedented degree since the Spanish Conquest.[2] Cultural identity in Andean societies finds expression in verbal discourse as well as other semiotic media, and is seen to be in a process of constant re-definition. The boundaries between those who consider themselves "mestizo", "indígena" or "blanco", or who are so considered by others, are never utterly fixed.

This paper will examine some of the types of discourse currently being generated within the climate of democratisation, indigenous activism, and neo-liberal reform in Latin America, with focus on discourse of identity. These discourses both reveal and shape ideological currents and shifts in society. Discourse of identity, on the one hand, reproduces pre-existing social categories, thus reinforcing stereotypes. On the other hand, in tension with the conservative forces of discourse, discourse channels the construction of new identities as subjects engage with the newly emergent social paradigms of the day.

Prominent in current thinking at policy-making level is the concept of interculturalism *(interculturalidad)*. This concept signals a paradigm shift in the way official discourse about cultural diversity is formulated, from "multiculturalism" to "interculturalism". With this

1 The issues raised in this paper are explored in more detail in Howard (2007). This paper was written prior to the election of Evo Morales to the Bolivian presidency in October 2005. Since that date, radical changes have taken place in public discourse in Bolivia; this will be the subject of a future study.

2 Colombia (in 1991), Peru (1993), Bolivia (1994), and Ecuador (1998) all underwent Constitutional Reform whereby States recognised for the first time the ethnic plurality of their respective Nations (Van Cott 2002: 47).

change of perspective ethnic diversity is no longer conceived of as an atomised multiplicity of cultures, but rather as an interconnected network of diverse groups, whose interconnections are constructed in discourse around values such as "mutual respect", "tolerance", and "understanding", and fostered through education, health, and other developmental channels.

In this paper I shall consider the extent to which the discourse of interculturalism is relevant and meaningful in social fields other than the macro level of state planning and policy formulation. Does this discourse filter down to the levels of civil society and the individual and, if so, what kind of reception does it encounter and what form does it take? Otherwise stated, does the concept of "interculturalism" surface in the ways that people at the grassroots think, speak, and act? And how can a study of discourse throw light on this question?

A methodological framework for the task of addressing these matters is provided in part by methods for the study of ethnicity developed in anthropology, and in part by the Critical Discourse Analysis approach developed in linguistics and sociolinguistics. I shall outline each of these in turn.

Frederik Barth's anthropological approach to the study of ethnicity (Barth 1969, 1994, 2000) is useful for my purposes. For Barth, contrary to the Marxist perspective whereby ethnicity is considered to be a superstructural expression of culture, ethnicity is thoroughly embedded in, and intrinsic to, social organisation: "a matter of the social organisation of cultural difference" (1994: 12). He develops the concept of boundary as a device for thinking about ethnic diversity, not so much in terms of the "cultural stuff" (traits, artefacts, beliefs, practices) that boundaries enclose, but rather as a metaphor for the imagined lines of demarcation of sameness and difference – lines which are continually tested, transgressed, erased, and redrawn in discourse and practice.

In his empirical application of the boundary concept, Barth focuses his attention on "persons who *change* their ethnic identity" (1994: 1; emphasis in the original). This perspective is highly salient to the Andean case. In talking with Andean people about identity, cultural change – actual and aspired to – is a recurrent theme: change through language shift, modification of clothing styles, urban migration, education, and so on. As evoked in discourse, the metaphor of

the boundary helps us to conceptualise such change as a series of contrasts (for example, between past and present, them and us, here and there). However, such dichotomies of difference are an ideological feature of the way that ethnicity is consciously constructed in discourse. As Barth himself emphasises, and as Andean society constantly reveals, cultural practices give rise to hybrid forms of identity that blur the boundaries of difference; dichotomies are never fixed. Thus, there is a tension between sameness, difference, and newness, or between dichotomy and hybridity, that emerges in cultural and social processes. This tension characterises the boundary as a fluid and negotiable construct which, metaphorically speaking, exists to be crossed, as it also exists as a borderland where identities merge and re-emerge in new guises.

Susan Gal and Judith Irvine (Gal/Irvine 1995) have examined the ideological function that language performs in the perception of cultural difference. They note how linguistic features perform an indexical role, not so much in referring to speech habits as such, but, rather, standing for other aspects of an individual's identity:

> […] participants' ideologies about language locate linguistic phenomena as part of, and as evidence for, what they believe to be systematic behavioural, aesthetic, affective, and moral contrasts among the social groups concerned (Gal/Irvine 1995: 973).

In similar vein, Deborah Cameron observes how, when people express concerns ostensibly about language, they may in fact be articulating concerns about other social issues which in themselves go unstated. As she puts it, ideas about language "get recruited to non-linguistic concerns" (Cameron 1995: 10). Thus, debate about language is part of a broader moral debate in which language performs a synecdochic function.

Effectively, in Andean discourse of identity, language is not the only parameter in the delineation of cultural boundaries. Other semiotic media – styles of dress, music, dance, culinary habits, and architecture, to name a few – also encode differential identities. These media correlate with each other in what amounts (in terms of Gal and Irvine's argument) to a moral discourse, creating effects of social inclusion, exclusion, and border-crossing. Furthermore, shifts in one medium may trigger shifts in another, signalling changing positions in the social order, as boundaries dissolve and are redrawn. These shift-

ings are significant in a society where deeply ingrained assumptions about social status are present and hard to dislodge.

Our question above was whether the discourse of interculturalism formulated at the state planning level filters down to the levels of civil society and the individual and, if so, what treatment it receives there. Barth's theorisation of ethnic boundaries further provides a framework for exploring this question.

Barth identifies three interpenetrating levels at which ethnic boundaries are seen to be constructed: the macro, the median, and the micro (Barth 1994: 20ss.). The macro level is that of state policies which provide a formal legal and institutional framework for social control. The median level is that at which collectivities are formed, which most directly constrain and compel people's expression and action at the micro level (civil society associations, for example). The micro level focuses on interpersonal interaction, or, as Barth puts it, "the management of selves in the complex context of relationships" (Barth 1994: 21). The macro and micro levels correspond to the standard sociological distinction between structure and agency, respectively. However, as Barth observes, the median level is often not built into accounts of the relationship between structure and agency in a sufficiently systematic way (Barth 1994: 21).

While the three levels are separable for analytical purposes, the aim of such analysis is to reveal the interpenetrations between them in practice. At the micro level, for example, the parameters within which ethnic identity is subjectively formed and experienced derives from the other levels: more indirectly in the case of the macro level, more immediately in the case of the median one. At the micro level the parameters converge, to quote: "as a lived context for each person's activities and interpretations" (Barth 1994: 21).

Barth's three-part model helps us toward a working understanding of the ways in which action, thought, and behaviour in society are shaped and framed. Such an understanding is needed in order to implement a critical discourse analysis of our textual data.

The Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) approach to discourse analysis is founded on the premise that discourse is embedded in social life, in so far as discourse constitutes social interaction and is not detachable from it. Following the pioneering work of Norman Fairclough (Fairclough 1995; Chouliaraki/Fairclough 1999) and Teun van

Dijk (Van Dijk 1993) in this field, CDA sets out to build a bridge between social and linguistic analysis through its recognition of the workings of power relations in language. The approach provides a tool for revealing the interdependency of linguistic form, message content, and social context.

One of the main principles underlying Teun van Dijk's approach to CDA is the concept of *social cognition* (Van Dijk 1993). This complements the model proposed by Barth for the study of how ideologies penetrate mentalities at different levels of society. In Van Dijk's usage, social cognition comprises "socially shared representations of societal arrangements, groups and relations, as well as mental operations such as interpretation, thinking and arguing, inferencing and learning, among others" (Van Dijk 1993: 257). Van Dijk observes that there tends to be an analytical gap between macro notions of the exercise of power through institutions and the micro level of communicative interaction. In order to relate discourse to society, and so reveal how discourse reproduces dominance and inequality, he argues, "we need to examine in detail the role of social representations in the minds of social actors" (Van Dijk 1993: 251). It is this cognitive interface "between discourse and dominance" which provides the "missing link" that helps us merge the analysis of discourse and the analysis of social structural relations (particularly power relations) into a single explanatory framework (Van Dijk 1993: 251). For Van Dijk social cognitions draw together the individual and the group in the shaping of shared understandings: "although embodied in the minds of individuals, social cognitions are social because they are shared and presupposed by group members" (Van Dijk 1993: 257). We can draw a parallel here with the role of collectivities in the formation of ideologies at Barth's "median level". I will draw on these premises in the textual analyses that follow.

Before proceeding to the analyses a word needs to be said about the nature of the data. I tape-recorded the oral testimonies in the course of semi-structured interviews conducted in highland Ecuador, Peru, and Bolivia, between 1998 and 1999. Semi-structured interviews produce verbal data that differ in important ways from the language of spontaneous interaction in daily life. In everyday interaction, as Chouliaraki and Fairclough observe: "people do not represent the world abstractly but in the course of and for the purposes of their social rela-

tions with others and the construction of social identities" (Chouliaraki/Fairclough 1999: 41). As these authors put it, the interaction reveals: "simultaneous *representational*, *relational* and *identificational* processes" (Chouliaraki/Fairclough 1999: 41; emphasis added). Thus, respectively, (i) the interaction contains elements that represent the world "out there"; (ii) social relations are manifested and constructed in the interaction; and (iii) as they interact, participants express their sense of identity in relation to others. Taking these premises as a point of departure, the question is how far these three functions of interaction also hold for the type of discourse elicited through interviewing.

It was my initial expectation that such discourse would be purely representational. However, in practice, the semi-structured interview format allowed the interviewee to develop a "storytelling" mode of discourse whereby the process of "representation" might also incorporate the relational and identificational functions of discourse. There are two grammatical features of the interview narratives that appear to perform these relational and identificational functions, respectively. The first is the use of direct reported speech; the second is the use of personal pronouns. Crucially, the embedding of relational and identificational features in the representation of reality yielded by an interview, performs an ideological function in the discourse, as I hope the examples will demonstrate.

Across the testimonies recorded, the degree to which the discourse of interculturalism has penetrated through to the grassroots, depends on the sociocultural position of the speaker, particularly on whether or not he or she are practitioners in intercultural education programmes.

My first example comes from an interview with a Spanish-Quechua bilingual secondary school teacher, an urban-based mestizo man from highland Bolivia (Interview extract 1). This speaker has a notably "unreconstructed" attitude toward the issue of cultural difference; his discourse is apparently unaffected by the new dominant paradigm. His comments on perceived linguistic and cultural boundaries between the students of urban and rural origin, respectively, in the town secondary school are signs of the conservative trend in discourse, whereby stereotypes are perpetuated. The example also illustrates the way in which the identificational and relational functions of discourse are put to the service of "representation" in the interview context, as discussed above, betraying the ideological position of the

speaker. The latter reveals his position, furthermore, in his portrayal of distinctive traits in the speech of others. These traits are perceived and portrayed as both marking out the boundaries of difference and constituting the ground for potential cultural change.

Following a comment from the interviewer about the social composition of the Secondary School in San Pedro, the interviewee embarks on a detailed metalinguistic account which evokes criteria of sociocultural distinction:

Interview extract 1

RH - […] debe haber cambiado bastante la composición social también del colegio.

GS - Uh… ha cambiado totalmente, prácticamente del campo apenas llegan los chicos, hablando un poco, un poco el castellano ¿no? O sea la cuestión de la modulación y demás, la pronunciación misma ¿no? Estaban un poco... especialmente en la vocalización ¿no? en otras palabras.

RH - ¿Cómo es eso?

GS - Claro, por ejemplo confunden mucho la i con la e, la o con la u ¿no? En vez de decir 'vida' dicen 'veda'. En vez de decir 'burro' dicen 'borro' ¿no? Entonces, en vez de decir 'vista' dicen 'vesta'. Entonces en la cuestión de vocalización, había esa situación ¿no? Pero llegan aquí, pero ya como ya hay televisión, videos, a la vez ya los profesores están siempre con ellos en clase y demás. Comienzan a corregir y prácticamente, y poco les queda esa tara realmente, de la cuestión de la vocalización.

RH - ¿Y se corrigen?

GS - Se corrigen ¿no? Entonces por ejemplo, llegan tímidos aquí a San Pedro. Pero, el momento de salir bachiller son... No se distinguen, si son realmente del campo o son de la ciudad, es igual. Tampoco en el color, en la simpatía son menos que en la ciudad. Hay chicos en el campo que son rubios de ojos verdes, hay chicos blancones en fin. Son altos, robustos. Entonces, nada que poder realmente rezagarlos a último plano. […]

The interviewee characterises the phonetic influence of Quechua on Spanish in the rural students' speech as a "tara" ("blemish") and argues that contact with the school environment and exposure to the mass media help students to overcome it, and learn the phonological distinctions required when speaking Spanish. Associated with this process of "phonetic boundary-crossing" are ideas of "wiping out" (elsewhere he says "borrar") racial and cultural distinctions between the young people of the countryside and those of the town.

In the testimony, the separate ideas of correcting phonetic habits and coming to resemble the town kids in terms of phenotype are jux-

taposed. This is the sort of juxtaposition that Van Dijk in his account of CDA refers to as "local coherence" – whereby the topic of discourse slips from one thing to another through an association of ideas. The speaker then bases his or her subsequent argument on the cognitive link, for which, if we look critically at the text, there is no explicit basis. The connection between the two sets of ideas is unspoken, and it is this unspoken connection that provides the "missing link" – as Van Dijk calls it – between the cognitive and the social spheres (Van Dijk 1993: 251). This "sociocognitive interface" (Van Dijk 1993: 251) is the realm of consciousness in which linguistic ideologies are inherent, and whose presence we can only detect through textual analysis. The same juxtaposition also illustrates Cameron's above-mentioned point about ideas of language being recruited to non-linguistic concerns.

The interviewee then tells a story which illustrates the perceived correlation between changing one's language habits and social betterment.

GS - Entonces ya mucha gente del campo está surgiendo en este momento. Por ejemplo, hace poco en Cochabamba… un alumno que no sabía vocalizar bien las palabras, pero tenía ese deseo de participar en las horas cívicas cantando, por lo menos recitando y cantaba pues de la vicuñita, cantaba y no pronunciaba bien, decía: "Di la luma vingu cumu vik'uñita brencando, saltando, cumu vik'uñita", decía así el chiquito.
La gente se reía pues, los alumnos, y el muchacho se aplazó ese año, y se ha ido a Chiru Q'asa a estudiar ahí. Por suerte ha terminado sus estudios, y después había ido hasta Cochabamba el muchacho. Pero, no se amilanó, tampoco tuvo vergüenza de su defecto, más bien ha debido corregir, y hace poco, hace un mes más o menos, estaba en Cochabamba… me saluda, me dice:
"Profesor, ¿cómo está usted?" me dice ¿no?
"Ucha el vik'uñitaps había estado aquí", le digo.
"Sí soy, manejo computación, soy técnico en paquetes", me ha dicho. "Y estoy ganando ahorita 2.500 bolivianos en una empresa. Ahora me han robado todo, de mi cuarto me lo han robado todos mis bienes, mi computadora, mi televisor, estoy andando en una demanda."
Había perdido totalmente toda situación de la mala pronunciación del castellano imagínate, totalmente.

RH - Sí. ¿Hablaba bien… el castellano?

GS - Perfecto. Y estaba bien vestido el hombre y no tampoco causó ningún desprecio por su padre que era un campesinito humilde. Estaba andando del brazo de su papá, claro que le había puesto una buena chamarra al papá, y ya pues [yaps]. Yo mismo no lo hubiera reconocido al muchacho ni a su padre. Cuando me han hablado, recién.

[Gerardo Sánchez. San Pedro de Buenavista, Bolivia. 22.04.1999. Cinta BO06]

The speaker illustrates his point with the example of an ex-pupil who moved upwards in the social ladder through a combination of educational success, urban migration and modification of his Quechua-influenced vowel sounds. It is notable how he uses direct reported speech and imitation to represent the speech he imputes to the former pupil. He even imitates himself when recounting, again through direct reported speech, the encounter in the city ("ucha el vik'uñitaps habiá estado aquí"). The example illustrates how the function of the discourse generated by the interview may be not only representational but also identificational and relational in the terms of Chouliaraki and Fairclough, as discussed above.

The use of embedded direct reported speech in this way, must be seen as a rhetorical strategy that suggests the ideological stance of the speaker. His imitation of the speech of the former student amounts to caricature. The phonetic feature that distinguished the young man's way of talking is presented as an object of ridicule and associated, again through local coherence, to the fact that he failed his year.

The fact that the "vicuñita" overcomes the problem attributed to him provokes admiration in the speaker. The latter applauds the fact that his former student was able to avoid the psychological damage that suffering such censure might have caused him. In his discourse there is a close cognitive association between "overcoming the blemish" and subsequent social and economic success. He also approves the student for not losing respect for his father as he climbs the social ladder. Other interviewees often referred to alienation from their parents in the context of talking about language shift, urban migration and cultural transformation.

The idea that the ex-pupil had eliminated supposedly "defective" phonetic traits from his speech is a classic example of what Cameron describes as "verbal hygiene" (Cameron 1995). In her thesis she demonstrates the moral underpinnings of the idea of linguistic correctness as a measure of value and social distinction. It is interesting to consider don Gerardo's discourse in this light: social change is described as a process of moral "self-correction" through loss of stigmatised linguistic features. Furthermore, phonetic cleansing is accompanied by an act of cleansing in another semiotic medium, that of clothing: the

respect the ex-pupil purportedly shows his humble peasant father is qualified by the assurance that "he had put a good quality jacket on his back."

The juxtaposition of ideas across different semiotic media illustrates the indexical role of language of which Gal and Irvine speak (Gal/Irvine 1995), and lends ideological weight to the "real" message that underpins don Gerardo's story. This message lays not on the surface of his words, but emerges in the critical reading. What we learn is not so much a story about an ex-pupil who made good (and whether this story is fact or fiction is not the point), but rather we learn something about don Gerardo's views on cultural difference and social distinction, which bear the hallmarks of a racist discourse. Don Gerardo's testimony gives insight into the sociolinguistic context in which *interculturalidad* has evolved as a social policy paradigm in the Andean states, in an attempt to redress the balance of discriminatory attitudes such as these.

My next two examples are from Ecuador. Here, by contrast with don Gerardo, we find evidence of the way in which the concept of interculturality as formulated in official policy filters down into discourses on the ground and gradually comes to alter attitudes.[3]

The speaker in Interview extract 2 is the provincial supervisor of the Intercultural Bilingual Education (IBE) programme in Cañar, Ecuador. In terms of Barth's three-part model, he is thus a "median level" practitioner of the principles of *interculturalidad*. In response to my question, he elaborates a complex personal view of the distinction that people (both insiders and outsiders) commonly make between the categories of indigenous person ("indígena") and "mestizo" in Ecuadorean society.

Interview extract 2

RH - ¿Qué piensa Ud. Germán sobre este tema de la diferencia que puede haber entre indígena y mestizo? Otros dirían que no hay diferencias,

3 The testimonies selected for study here are not intended as generalisable illustrations of discourses arising severally in the countries in which they were recorded. Rather, they exemplify types of discourse to be found equally well in all locations. The variable, as mentioned previously, is the degree to which the interviewees are involved in the implementation of Intercultural Bilingual Education programmes, a sociocultural environment that has fomented a particular mindset among practitioners.

otra persona diría somos todos humanos, entonces, no hay que enfatizar las diferencias. ¿Qué opina Ud?

GL - Bueno, yo siempre digo [...] si nosotros hablamos de los dos mundos que yo siempre hablo, hay la diferencia, porque el mestizo es mestizo, tiene su área geográfica, él vive en sector urbano, él tiene una cultura, tiene tal vez una ciencia. Igual también el mundo indígena, y tenemos nuestras formas, nuestras concepciones de las cosas, ahí está la diferencia para mí. Por ejemplo para el niño indígena si ellos observan el sol, tiene un concepto de ese sol y ellos pueden dar una explicación filosófica de ese sol, de la luna, de las estrellas, de la madre tierra, de la naturaleza, de formas de trabajo, formas de educación. E igual el mestizo puede dar su explicación filosófica. Y a nivel de la estructura mental el pueblo indígena tenemos nuestra propia estructura, igual también el mundo hispano. […] Y como dijo la compañera de Quilloac hay otros elementos más, por ejemplo la vestimenta, puede identificar al indígena como tal, y también la parte lingüística, también es un elemento tan fundamental para identificarnos como indígenas. Y por otra parte, para mi criterio son digamos los valores del hombre. Porque hay muchos campesinos mestizos que ellos siempre han identificado ¿no? Yo soy indígena, y tal vez una mala suerte mía, la evolución del hombre ¿no? Bueno, cambió, la transformación o la imposición ha cambiado al hombre. Entonces, también hay personas que siendo mestizos, sí lo reconocen que ellos son indígenas, porque hay indígenas también, es posible que sean mestizos. Sino a lo mejor porque vivían en una comunidad tan lejana igual que acá en Laurel, si ellos crecieron la trenza, aprendieron a hablar el quichua y hoy son indígenas, pero en realidad ellos no son indígenas. Por ejemplo mis familiares, yo pienso que yo no soy de los raíces indígenas, somos de raíces españolas, desgraciadamente uno ha salido un pequeño feo, moreno todo eso ¿no? Pero en cambio los familiares son diferentes, entonces justo hablábamos de mis cuñados, por ejemplo, ellos le dicen cualquiera que es una gringa porque sí tiene fisonomía. Entonces, yo creo que a pesar de ello yo nunca me he sentido que a lo mejor seré de raíz española ¿no? Sino más bien yo me he sentido en carne propia como indígena y siempre defiendo con los elementos que acabo de indicar. Ahí está la diferencia del indígena, pero ahora en cambio dentro de la concepción de la interculturalidad, nosotros queremos buscar la unidad, la diversidad y para ello tenemos que ser conscientes, tanto el mundo indígena, también el sector urbano y eso no lo podemos conseguir hasta ahora, pero yo pienso que ese es el reto, ese es el sueño, ese es el trabajo que estamos haciendo en la Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, por eso jamás hablamos que es una educación indígena, sino más bien de una educación un poco más pluralista, un poco más comunitaria, un poco más social, frente al sistema de educación tradicional. […]

[Germán Loma. Quichua-castellano bilingüe coordinado. Supervisor Pedagógico, Dirección Provincial de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe – Cañar, Ecuador. 14.12.1998. Cinta EC23]

Germán's discourse contains not one line of argument, but a number of threads, which reveal a heterogeneous range of positionings with regard to his sense of identity. He draws boundaries between social groups and types, himself included. Yet as soon as they are drawn, these boundaries are interrogated, re-negotiated, dissolved, and re-defined.

He starts from a dichotomous view, whereby mestizos and *indígenas* belong to "two worlds", categorically distinct due to geographical, cultural and conceptual factors. However, he shifts ground from this view when he says "por otra parte, para mi criterio son, digamos, los valores del hombre". In invoking the universalist category of "el hombre" the separatist thesis is hard to sustain. He moves to a more polyfacetic portrayal of cultural identity, as something harder to categorise. His very language reveals a slippery perception of identity, where boundaries are blurred: "también hay personas que siendo mestizos, sí lo reconocen que ellos son indígenas, porque hay indígenas también, es posible que sean mestizos". According to Germán, there may be mestizos who, by dint of living in close contact with indigenous communities, may become *de facto* Indians by growing their hair and learning Quichua. On this view, cultural transformation can be a two way street: the indigenous may become mestizo but equally the mestizo may adopt indigenous traits.

With the shift in footing from an essentialist view of the indigenous and mestizo constituting two separate worlds, to a more realistic evocation of cultural identities as fluid and changeable, the speaker goes on to relate the situation to his own experience. He attempts to apply ethnic categories to his own family, again with some difficulty: on the one hand he affirms Spanish roots, yet for himself he claims indigenousness. He applies physionomic criteria to his own case, although the switch from first to third person singular at this point creates a distancing effect: "yo me he sentido […] indígena [...] uno ha salido un pequeño feo, moreno […]". In fact it is rare in the interview data for people to refer to colour of hair or skin in talking about cultural difference. Far more pertinent in navigating the imagined boundaries between indigenous and mestizo are matters of language, dress, hairstyle, literacy levels, and place of residence. A certain sensitivity around the subject of phenotype may explain Germán's use of third person singular to express his idea of his own appearance.

Towards the end of the extract, Germán changes focus yet again. He invokes the official discourse of *interculturalidad* as a means to suggest that in fact the point is not to reinforce difference, but rather to promote the idea of "unidad con diversidad" (the electoral slogan of various political parties in Ecuador and Bolivia in the 1990s.) This point sits awkwardly with the separatism he professed earlier. The speaker's vocabulary evokes the fashionable philosophy of *interculturalidad* when he speaks of education as "pluralista", "comunitaria", "social", and denies the idea (sometimes heard among indigenous leaders in Ecuador) that a fully fledged IBE (Intercultural Bilingual Education) should be "educación indígena".

The allusion here is to difficulties due to the fact that, contrary to the official intention of "interculturalidad", the Ecuadorean IBE system has triggered a segregationist spirit between IBE designated schools, which fall under the jurisdiction of the Dirección Nacional de Educación Intercultural Bilingüe (DINEIB), and the mainstream hispanic schools, which are administered from the Ministry of Education.[4] Within the IBE schools themselves, this segregation repeats itself, with the teachers falling into two camps, and the words "bilingüe" and "hispano", originally neutral references to sociolinguistic traits, have evolved into classificatory terms that differentiate the *indígena* from the mestizo, yet another way of discursively constructing ethnic boundaries.

Germán's discourse gives us insights into wider tendencies in Andean societies, whereby there is tension between discursive habits that reinforce the ideal of difference, and contrary ones that promote the ideal of unity. This ties in with the tension between the dichotomous view of society, expressed in Germán's opening sentences, and the hybridised view, evoked in the middle section when he is trying to explain racial and cultural mixture in his own family. The tension between dichotomy and hybridity as models of the social order amounts to a tension between an ideology of ethnicity that reaffirms dichotomous claims, and social reality, which generates hybrid forms in all spheres of cultural practice (religion, music, dance, dress, speech, and so on). The question then arises whether the reality of hybridisation generates an ideology of its own. Does not the idea of

4 Fuller details are found in Howard (2007).

hybridity, that is, the prevailing of the idea of sameness over the idea of difference, underpin the concept of interculturality, despite the lip-service that is paid in official discourse to the ideal of unity with diversity? I will come back to this suggestion.

Germán Loma's testimony weaves together ideologies from various discursive fields, each evoking different dimensions of his life experience: (i) as a member of the indigenous *Pachakutik Nuevo País* party, working for the defence of indigenous rights, for whom the ideology of separatism is an important rhetorical tool; (ii) as an educator committed to the cause of IBE, with a "dream" of an inclusive education system based on "interculturalidad"; and (iii) as an individual who perceives a range of phenotypical traits among the members of his family.

The separatist position from which he begins his testimony appears to be contrary to the argument for interculturalism he adopts by the end of the extract. Part way through, these polarised positions blur. As he seeks to apply the categories of ethnicity to the people in his own life, neither separatism nor interculturalism seem to be satisfactory models; in this intermediate terrain the boundaries of ethnic identity defy definition.

However, despite the apparent heterogeneity of these positions, critical analysis leads us to suggest that there is a certain underlying coherence among them. From the indigenous point of view, the doctrine of separatism inverts the project of cultural *mestizaje* upon which national integration policies of the early to mid-20th century (including *indigenismo*) turned. The dominant classes then favoured *mestizaje* as a means to neutralize interethnic conflict, which threatened their hegemony. In this light, we can understand why the discourse of difference plays such an important role in indigenous political mobilisation today. As part of the politics of identity widely taking hold in Latin America since the early 1990s, external signs of cultural distinction that were suppressed in previous times are revived, emphasised, and sometimes even invented where they did not previously exist.

Of course, today's doctrine of interculturality has rather different political and philosophical roots. Interculturality is seen as a step forward from the paradigm of multiculturalism, which – as has been demonstrated in Europe and the US – can over-emphasise difference with negative consequences. Interculturality is proposed as a multi-

directional model for an integrated democratic society based on mutual respect for difference. Yet there are problems with implementing this agenda at the grassroots. Particularly problematic is the fact that the paradigm of interculturality was introduced from without, promoted by international development and funding agencies in consultation with state planning bodies. While respect for cultural diversity is among the demands made by indigenous organisations themselves, and is now legislated for under the terms of Constitutional reform, when it comes to being translated into practice on the ground, interculturality proves to be rather an ambiguous thing, due to the not necessarily compatible agendas of those who formulated the paradigm and those on the receiving end.

This ambiguity suggests itself when "interculturality" enters the discourse of politicised median level indigenous educators such as Germán, where it becomes interwoven with other ideological strands also present. Germán has difficulty reconciling the ideal of difference with the reality of hybrid identities, on the one hand, and with the official line on interculturalism, on the other hand. Indeed, we might ask whether the separatist views he expresses represent a subversion of the interculturalism ideal. And if this is so, might it be that from the indigenous point of view it is intuitively felt, as I suggested previously, that the official state policy of interculturalism contains a hidden agenda of cultural homogenisation? Otherwise stated, does the doctrine of interculturality not contain traces of the homogenising discourses of previous eras, such as that of *indigenismo*, reinvented under a new guise for a new era?

I mentioned the practice of using the terms "bilingüe" and "hispano" as ethnic labels to distinguish between indigenous and mestizo teachers within the Ecuadorean IBE system. The divisionism that this suggests is not the whole story, however. Interculturalism also expresses itself as workplace solidarity and serves to counter divisionist attitudes. I spent time at the IBE training college in Cañar, observing classrooms and talking to staff. There was clearly a good team spirit among teachers and students alike, regardless of ethnic background. This sense of cameraderie was encapsulated in their use of the Quichua word "mashi" meaning "comrade" as a term of address when speaking both Quichua and Spanish. Its use in the jargon of the intercultural teacher training college neutralises the opposition evoked by

the terms "bilingüe" vs. "hispano", and can be read as discursively constructing the spirit of *interculturalidad*.

According to what people told me, "mashi" is an innovation in Ecuadorean Quichua dating from the indigenous mobilisations of the 1990s. Certainly, when I did fieldwork in Cañar in the mid-1970s, it was not to be heard. On the contrary, in those days, the term "compañero" was a ubiquitous hispanism in Quichua to refer to co-workers or political comrades. "Mashi" appears to be a lexical introduction into present-day Ecuadorean Quichua from Peruvian/Bolivian Quechua where its phonetic equivalent "masi" is a particle indicating an association between people who share a common activity, akin in meaning to the English suffix "mate".

The transition from the use of "compañero" in the 1970s to the use of "mashi" in the 1990s is significant. The terms construct discursive fields of two quite different ideological orders, each proper to its age.[5] It is also interesting that the direction of the lexical borrowing in the 1990s changed. In the 1970s the ideologically loaded "compañero" migrated from Spanish into Quichua inspired by the leftwing political currents with which it was associated; now, an indigenous term, inspired by the identity politics of today, has replaced the hispanism found in 1970s Quichua and, as a borrowing, also infiltrates Spanish discourse.

The ideological charge of "mashi" was not given at the outset, but accrued to the word over time as part of the discursive processes of interculturalism. The speaker in Interview Extract 3 – one of the indigenous teachers from the IBE training institute in Cañar – describes how the process unfolded:

Interview extract 3

PS - […] Fueron los primeros profesores bilingües y ellos se fueron a un curso en Pujilí. Antes de irse a ese curso ellos salieron del Cañar diciendo 'compañeros', pero regresaron de Pujilí y llegaron diciendo

5 This case of a Quichua word being introduced into Spanish and effectively dislodging its Spanish lexical equivalent in certain contexts could be taken as an example of what Hill and Coombs, inspired by Bakhtin, describe as "translinguistics" – whereby borrowings back and forth between Spanish and Quechua undergo changes in meaning in their new environment, what these authors refer to as "semantic remodeling" (Hill/Coombs 1982). Note that I use "Quechua" to refer to the language in general, and "Quichua" to refer to the Ecuadorean variety, in line with local usage.

> 'mashis', entonces todo el mundo nos reíamos, 'mashi', 'mashi', inclusive la palabra 'mashi' era como una especie de representación a los bilingües, a los profesores bilingües, entonces, nosotros decíamos: 'ya viene el mashi', o 'por ahí está el mashi', 'ese es el mashi'. […] Pero esa palabra pudo traspasar toda esa barrera, cosa que ahora sin ser profesores bilingües, inclusive sin ser estudiantes, la gente en el campo, en las organizaciones, muy poco utilizan la palabra 'compañero'. […]

According to the speaker, usage originated among participants in the IBE training programmes: "salieron de Cañar diciendo 'compañeros', pero regresaron […] diciendo 'mashis'". What is interesting is the way that social, cultural and linguistic change go along with movement from inside to outside, as professional training programmes demand that trainees travel to other locations to follow courses, and return to their communities transformed. "Mashi" is a discursive marker of the attendant political process through which the indigenous classes have been going over the last fifteen years – first emerging in IBE contexts, and then spreading into the wider field.

This gradual growth in the ideological value of "mashi" in Ecuadorean Quichua discourse exemplifies what the Russian linguist V. N. Voloshinov, in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, describes as "the social life of the verbal sign" (Voloshinov 1986: 21), to quote:

> […] the word is the most sensitive *index of social changes*, and what is more, of changes still in the process of growth, still without definitive shape and not as yet accommodated into already regularized and fully defined ideological systems. The word is the medium in which occur the slow quantitative accretions of those changes which have not yet […] produced a new and fully-fledged ideological form. The word has the capacity to register all the transitory, delicate, momentary phases of social change (1986: 19; emphasis in the original).

The Cañar interviewee then describes how "mashi" became part of his own vocabulary. His explanation helps us appreciate the intrinsic relationship between political, educational and linguistic dimensions of the intercultural project. In Voloshinov's terms the word gradually took on "a new and fully-fledged ideological form":

> Entonces como les decía, yo enseñaba en la organización, a mí me quedó la palabra 'compañeros,' para mí no fue fácil salir de la palabra 'compañeros', a mí mismo me hacía, me daba vergüenza decir 'mashi'. Pero después ya en el colegio me dieron la materia de quichua. Entonces yo ya no podía decir delante de los alumnos 'compañeros', debía decir quichua y al fuerzo tuve que aprender la palabra 'mashi'. Desde ahí, a veces a los

> compañeros de antes, de las organizaciones […] cuando van a encontrar, cuando están todavía lejos, como que quisiera decir 'compañeros' pero ya no puedo decir. En cambio ahora ya le digo 'mashi' a cualquier compañero. Entonces, como esa palabra es un proceso, tiene que pasar por un tiempo crítico y luego tiene que llegar a difundirse a nivel general. Yo creo que con el idioma quichua, con el quichua unificado tiene que, o más bien está en ese proceso de generalización. […]
>
> [Pablo Soria. Quichua-castellano coordinado. Profesor indígena del Instituto Pedagógico Intercultural Bilingüe, Cañar, Ecuador. 09.01.1999. Cinta EC28]

The process was one of gradually discarding his use of "compañero" in favour of "mashi". Lexical recuperation of this sort, whereby Spanish vocabulary is replaced by Quichua, is a feature of corpus language planning across the board in IBE circles. As also in Peru and Bolivia, the strategy is motivated by the need to standardise and renew the language for the purpose of writing. In Ecuador particularly the so-called "quichua unificado" is spreading into everyday speech (King 2000; Howard 2007). The testimony gives insight into the subjective experience of making the new linguistic philosophy one's own; the change does not come about overnight, but as new social and political policies filter down into changing social reality, in the process of becoming "other", speakers come to "populate" the new forms of speech, to invoke Bakhtin (1981: 293-294). Such innovations, to adopt the perspective of Pierre Bourdieu, can be see as the products of a "linguistic habitus" in process of transformation (Bourdieu 1991: 48). Pablo Soria sees this transformation as a "proceso" that goes through stages of birth, growth and maturation – from an initial tentative one ("tiene que pasar por un tiempo crítico") to a later one of consolidation and spread ("tiene que llegar a difundirse a nivel general").

It is a short step from Pablo Soria's explanation to Voloshinov's theoretical proposal cited above. The "tiempo crítico" identified by Soria would be the stage at which the word is "still without definitive shape [...] not as yet accommodated into [...] regularized and fully defined ideological systems". The process of "generalización" in Soria's words would correspond to the later stage whereby the word acquires "a new and fully-fledged ideological form" in the Russian linguist's account. This example is a fine illustration of the part played by linguistic accommodations in the filtering of policy ideology – such as that of interculturalism – from the macro level to the grass-

roots. In Voloshinov's emphasis on the word as a 'sensitive *index of social changes'* we find an echo of Barth's account of the ethnic boundary as a metaphor for measuring processes of cultural change. I hope in this paper to have demonstrated the importance of paying close attention to discourse as a means of teasing out the means by which hegemony in the Andes – as expressed in the official formulation of the "interculturalidad" doctrine – is countered or consented to in discourses lower down the line.

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